



2022

A YEAR IN REVIEW

Equity and Inclusion Cabinet

CITY OF BOSTON'S EQUITY AND INCLUSION STATEMENT

The City of Boston has played a role in causing and perpetuating the inequities in our society. To break down these barriers, we are embedding equity and inclusion into everything we do.

We define equity as ensuring every community has the resources it needs to thrive in Boston. This requires the active process of meeting individuals where they are. Inclusion is engaging every resident to build a more welcoming and supportive city. We are building a city for everyone, where diversity makes us a more empowered collective.

OUR VISION

A more equitable and inclusive Boston is possible. For too long, historically oppressed residents have been excluded from the civic process and access to opportunities. Our City government has the opportunity to produce different outcomes by doing things differently from the status quo. As Boston nears its 400th year anniversary, we have the responsibility to build a more equitable and inclusive democracy that allows for every resident, regardless of their identities and experiences, to thrive.

WHAT WE DO

We transform City policies, programs, and practices so that every resident has full access to what the City of Boston has to offer. With the goals of achieving racial justice and improving social determinants of health through systemic change for historically excluded communities, the Equity & Inclusion Cabinet,

- Directly improve outcomes with and for residents
- Counsell all city departments to better address issues of equity, inclusion, and access
- Create the conditions for residents to build their collective power

WHO WE ARE

- [Black Male Advancement](#)
Frank Farrow, Executive Director
- [Disabilities Commission](#)
Kristen McCosh, Commissioner
- [Fair Housing and Equity](#)
Robert Terrell, Executive Director
- [Human Rights Commission](#)
Susan Helmy, Int. Executive Director
- [Immigrant Advancement](#)
Monique Tú Nguyen, Executive Director
- [Language and Communications Access](#)
Jeniffer Vivar Wong, Executive Director
- [LGBTQ+ Advancement](#)
Quincey Roberts, Executive Director
- [Women's Advancement](#)
Alexandra Valdez, Executive Director



YEAR 1: LAYING THE FOUNDATION

In 2022, we established the key pieces of our infrastructure by:

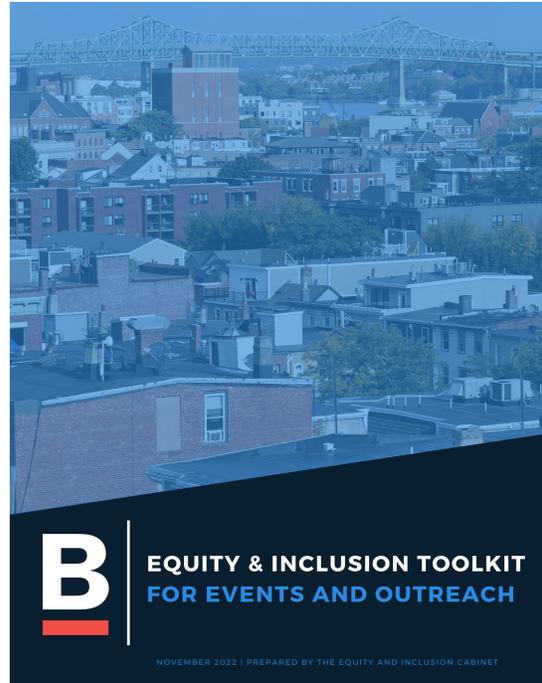
- Expanding cabinet and department staff
- Released the Equity and Inclusion Toolkit
- Created initiatives to directly connect the communities our cabinet represent

EXPANDING THE CABINET

The cabinet established key leadership and operational positions to carry out the cabinet’s mission and vision, The following positions were filled:

- Chief of Staff
- Senior Advisor on Racial Justice
- Director of Community Engagement and Communications
- Director of Policy and Research
- Director of Strategic Partnerships
- Director of Administration and Finance
- Supporting Indigenous Communities Fellow

SHIFTING CITY PRACTICES



[The Equity and Inclusion Toolkit](#) was created to shift outreach strategies to support the City of Boston to connect with residents who historically were disconnected from City events and resources. Equity and Inclusion Cabinet leadership led training sessions on the material with the Mayor’s Office and the Office of Housing to navigate current processes and ways to improve.



Working as the City of Boston’s consulting body for more equitable practices, the Office of Equity and Inclusion advised key departments on their current processes. The Office of Budget worked alongside the cabinet to create **accountability metrics for FY24 budgets** to ensure the most vulnerable populations were centered throughout financial planning.



Our office convened a working group of social workers and service providers to coordinate solutions for **youth aging out of the foster care system**. Collectively, we will offer recommendations to create pathways to education, entrepreneurship, and jobs after graduation.

COMMUNITY IMPACT

Lead Boston

Immigrant Advancement and Black Male Advancement to empower residents who wish to be civic leaders in their community. **Immigrants Lead Boston** completed their second cohort of 20 leaders who represent 18 countries, 9 Boston neighborhoods, and speak 14 languages.

This initiative expanded with the creation of **Black Men Lead**, to empower Black men to connect with City departments and community organizations around

issues pertaining to their lived experiences.



Community Resource and Job Fairs

In partnership with the Office of Human Resources, the Equity and Inclusion Cabinet held a series of fairs in Roxbury, Dorchester, and Hyde Park to ease the application process for employment with the City of Boston. Over **20 departments** joined us along with dedicated support for civil service applications and CORI background assistance.



Boston Gives Back



Boston Gives Back: Winter Wonderland celebrated the holiday season's spirit of unity while creating opportunities for residents to learn about Christmas, Hanukkah, and Kwanzaa. This family-friendly event was filled with holiday activities that intentionally highlighted Boston's diverse cultural makeup. Over **100 families** received seasonal gift wrapping, decorations, toys, and coats.

Community Listening Sessions

Departments within the Equity and Inclusion Cabinet held a series of community listening sessions to connect with residents and prioritize initiatives to support their wellbeing. Listening sessions were held virtually and in-person with interpretation assistance. Many of the in-person sessions were intentionally placed in neighborhoods with diverse populations to ensure constituencies were represented in the findings.



The cabinet collectively co-hosted a number of targeted sessions to share timely information in response to the **Orange Line Shutdown** with the Office of Neighborhood Services. **The Budget Office's information sessions** also gave residents the opportunity to understand the timeline of the City's budget process and how to get involved.

OUR DEPARTMENTS AND INITIATIVES

Establishing New Departments

In 2022, Mayor Mchelle Wu established two new departments to improve the outcomes of particular groups; Black men and boys and the LGBTQ+ community.

In February, **the Mayor's Office for Black Male Advancement** was established to ensure Black men and boys have support to thrive and share in our City's prosperity. The office works in conjunction with the **Commission on Black Men and Boys** to advise the Mayor on issues and solutions for closing the disparity gap for Black men in Boston. Since its establishment, the department has granted **\$100,000** to community organizations who provide critical services and support to Black residents.



The Mayor’s Office of LGBTQ+ Advancement followed in June and immediately sprung into action in response to hate crimes against the LGBTQ+ community in Boston. The office created a collaborative **LGBTQ+ Public Safety Plan** with the Boston Police Department, Human Rights Commission, the state’s U.S. Attorney’s Office, and residents. The department also collaborated with BPHC and community volunteers to share health and vaccine information during the Monkeypox outbreak.



In October, the inaugural **Supporting Indigenous Communities Fellow** joined the cabinet to increase dialogue with local tribes and foster reconciliation and support for Indigenous people and communities.

Throughout the year, the **Employee Resource Group** network expanded to include new spaces for **Wellness, Zero Waste, UMass Boston Alumni, and Caretakers**. Cultural celebrations and professional development increased along with partnerships with community partners and other ERGs in workplaces across the city.

Our work for **Racial Justice** continued to lay the foundation for social and economic resilience. **The Activism Student Program** empowered students to use their creativity and artistic talent to

advocate for a more inclusive future. **Dialogue to Action** also started as a series of community conversations to identify actionable steps to heal and rectify racial injustices. The project aims to fund community organizations and initiates in every neighborhood to advance racial equity.

Other Department Highlights

Language and Communications Access increased staff to deepen the city’s investment in making government accessible for all residents. The Office continued to support citywide translation and interpretation needs. Their next phase of implementation is to hire in-house interpreters for Boston’s most requested languages.

Women’s Advancement held a series of community listening sessions to prioritize future initiatives along with the Redefining Womanhood survey. From the feedback gathered, the office focused their efforts on **reproductive and menstrual justice**. The office had an informational campaign with resources for reproductive rights and partner violence. The office also worked with community partners Love Your Menses and MassNOW to host a **Period Pop-Up art gallery** in City Hall.



Immigrant Advancement diligently responded to timely news like the war in Ukraine and the migrant crisis to ensure Boston was ready for incoming individuals and families. In line with their mission, the office secured **\$4.1 million dollars in ARPA funding** to further invest in immigrant communities. MOIA also supported local organizations to amplify mental health resources in response to Covid. Between initiatives and events like **Citizenship Day**, monthly legal clinics, and ongoing consultations, residents were able to find pathways to citizenship.



The Disabilities Commission upheld and expanded accessibility standards in Boston. **The ordinance to include closed captioning on public-facing televisions** was signed in December, which works to increase accessibility for those with limited hearing. The Office held **ADA Day and Civic Engagement Day** to highlight the advances of protections for persons with disabilities.



Under new leadership, **the Office of Fair Housing and Equity and the Human Rights Commission** continued to advance anti-discriminatory practices in Boston. Each department educated the community on how to report housing discrimination and hate crime incidents. Human Rights Commission partnered with the U.S. Attorney General's Office on their campaign for the state's anti-hate hotline. Information was shared in collaborative events such as the **LGBTQ+ Public Safety Town Hall**. Residents testified to their experiences with hate incidents that targeted the LGBTQ+ community.

Community Town Hall on LGBTQ+ Public Safety Plan

WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 14, 2022
6:00PM-7:30PM • Zoom Meeting

The Human Rights Commission presents this Community Town Hall in partnership with the Mayor's Office of LGBTQ+ Advancement and City Councilor Kendra Lara's Office.

The purpose of this session is to provide an open and safe space for all that identify as LGBTQ+ to speak about their experiences and concerns with hate incidents in Boston. We want to hear from you.

Limited speaking slots available for community testimonials.

Attend the Zoom meeting: bit.ly/LGBTQpublicsafety
Share your experience: bit.ly/lgbtqtestimonial



“We are laying the foundation for sustainable City practices that guarantee historically excluded residents are included in Boston’s present and future.”

- **Mariangely Sols Cervera,**
Chief of Equity and Inclusion